

Troilus and Cressida.

And thou most reuerend for thy stretch-out life,
I giue to both your speeches: which were such,
As *Agamemnon* and the hand of Greece
Should hold vp high in Brasse: and such againe
As venerable *Nestor* (hatch'd in Silver)
Should with a bond of ayre, strong as the Axletree
In which the Heauens ride, knit all Greekes eares
To his experienc'd tongue: yet let it please both
(Thou Great, and Wise) to heare *Vlysses* speake.

Aga. Speak Prince of *Ithaca*, and be't of lesse expect:
That matter needlesse of importlesse burthen
Divide thy lips; then we are confident
When ranke *Thersites* opes his Masticke iawes,
We shall heare Musicke, Wit, and Oracle.

Vlyss. Troy yet vpon his basis had bene downe,
And the great *Hectors* sword had lack'd a Master
But for these instances.

The specialty of Rule hath bene neglected;
And looke how many Grecian Tents do stand
Hollow vpon this Plaine, so many hollow Factions.
When that the Generall is not like the Hieue,

To whom the Forragers shall all repaire,
What Hony is expected? Degree being vizarded,
Th'vnworthiest shewes as fairely in the Maske.

The Heauens themselves, the Planets, and this Center,
Obserue degree, priority, and place,
In stature, course, proportion, season, forme,

Office, and custome, in all line of Order:
And therefore is the glorious Planet Sol
In noble eminence, enthron'd and spear'd

Amidst the other, whose med'cinable eye
Corrects the ill Aspects of Planets euill,
And postes like the Command'ment of a King,

Sans checke, to good and bad. But when the Planets
In euill mixture to disorder wander,
What Plagues, and what portents, what mutiny?

What raging of the Sea? shaking of Earth?
Commotion in the Windes? Frights, changes, horrors,
Diuert, and cracke, rend and deracinate

The vniuity, and married calme of States
Quite from their fixure? O, when Degree is shak'd,
(Which is the Ladder to all high designs)

The enterprize is sicke. How could Communities,
Degrees in Schooles, and Brother-hoods in Cities,
Peacefull Commerce from diuidable shores,

The primogenitiue, and due of Byrth,
Prerogative of Age, Crownes, Scepters, Lawrels,
(But by Degree) stand in Authentique place?

Take but Degree away, vn-tune that string,
And hearken what Discord followes: each thing meetes
In meere oppugnancie. The bounded Waters,

Should lift their bosomes higher then the Shores,
And make a toppe of all this solid Globe:
Strength should be Lord of imbecility,

And the rude Sonne should strike his Father dead:
Force should be right, or rather, right and wrong,
(Betweene whose endlesse iarre, Justice recides)

Should loose her names; and so should Iustice too:
Then every thing includes it selfe in Power,
Power into Will, Will into Appetite,

And Appetite (an vniuersall Wolfe,
So doubly seconded with Will, and Power)
Must make perforce an vniuersall prey,

And last, eate vp himselfe.
Great *Agamemnon*:
This Chaos, when Degree is suffocate,

Followes the choaking:

And this neglect of Degree, is it
That by a pace goes backward in a purpose
It hath to climbe. The Generall's disdain'd

By him one step below; he, by the next,
That next, by him beneath: so every step
Exampl'd by the first pace that is sicke

Of his Superiour, growes to an enuious Feauer
Of pale, and bloodlesse Emulation.
And 'tis this Feauer that keeps Troy on foote,

Not her owne sinewes. To end a tale of length,
Troy in our weaknesse liues, not in her strength.
Nest. Most wisely hath *Vlysses* heere discover'd

The Feauer, whereof all our power is sicke.
Aga. The Nature of the sicknesse found (*Vlysses*)
What is the remedie?

Vlyss. The great *Achilles*, whom Opinion crownes,
The sinew, and the fore-hand of our Hoste,
Hauing his eare full of his ayery Fame,

Growes dainty of his worth, and in his Tent
Lyes mocking our designs. With him, *Patroclus*,
Vpon a lazie Bed, the liue-long day

Breakes scurrill iests,
And with ridiculous and awkward action,
(Which Slanderer, he imitation call's)

He Pageants vs. Sometime great *Agamemnon*,
Thy tolesse deputacion he puts on;
And like a strutting Player, whose conceit

Lies in his Ham-string, and doth thinke it rich
To heare the wooden Dialogue and sound
'Twixt his stretch footing, and the Scaffoldage,

Such to be pittied, and ore-ressed seeming
He acts thy Greatnesse in: and when he speaks,
'Tis like a Chime a mending. With tearmes vnquard,

Which from the tongue of roaring *Typhon* dropt,
Would teemes Hyperboles. At this fustie stuffe,
The large *Achilles* (on his prest-bed lolling)

From his deepe Chest, laughs out a lowd applause,
Cries excellent, 'tis *Agamemnon* iust.
Now play me *Nestor*; hum, and stroke thy Beard

As he, being drest to some Oration:
That's done, as neere as the extreamest ends
Of parallels; as like, as *Vulcan* and his wife,

Yet good *Achilles* still cries excellent.
'Tis *Nestor* right. Now play him (me) *Patroclus*,
Arming to answer in a night-Alarme,

And then (forsooth) the faint defects of Age
Must be the Scene of myrth, to cough, and spit,
And with a palseie fumbling on his Gorget,

Shake in and out the Riuet: and at this sport
Sir Valour dies; cries, O enough *Patroclus*,
Or, giue me ribs of Steele, I shall split all

In pleasure of my Spleene. And in this fashion,
All our abilities, gifts, natures, shapes,
Seuerals and generals of grace exact,

Atchieuements, plots, orders, preuentions,
Excitements to the field, or speech for truce,
Successe or losse, what is, or is not, serues

As stuffe for these two, to make paradoxes.
Nest. And in the imitation of these twaine,
Who (as *Vlysses* sayes) Opinion crownes

With an Imperiall voyce, many are infect:
Ajax is growne selfe-will'd, and beares his head
In such a reyne, in full as proud a place

As broad *Achilles*, and keeps his Tent like him;
Makes factious Feasts, railes on our state of Warre

Troilus and Cressida.

Bold as an Oracle, and sets *Thersites*
A laue, whose Gall coines slanders like a Mint,
To match vs in comparissons with dirt,
To weaken and discredit our exposure,

How ranke loeuer rounded in with danger.
Vlyss. They take our policy, and call it Cowardice,
Count Wisdome as no member of the Warre,

Forc-stall prescience, and esteeme no acte
But that of hand; The still and mentall parts,
That do contriue how many hands shall strike

When finesse call them on, and know by measure
Of their obseruant toyle, the Enemies waight,
Why this hath not a fingers dignity:

They call this Bed-wooke, Mapp'ry, Closet-Warre:
So that the Ramage that batters downe the wall,
For the great swing and rudenesse of his poize,

They place before his hand that made the Engine,
Or those that with the finenesse of their soules,
By Reason guide his execution.

Nest. Let this be granted, and *Achilles* horse
Makes many *Thetis* tonnes. *Tucket*
Aga. What Trumpet? Looke *Menelaus*.

Men. From Troy. *Enter Aeneas.*
Aga. What would you fore our Tent?
Aene. Is this great *Agamemnons* Tent, I pray you?

Aga. Euen this.
Aene. May one that is a Herald, and a Prince,
Do a faire message to his Kingly eares?

Aga. With surety stronger then *Achilles* arme,
Fore all the Greekish heads, which with one voyce
Call *Agamemnon* Head and Generall.

Aene. Faire leaue, and large security. How may
A stranger to those most Imperiall looks,
Know them from eyes of other Mortals?

Aga. How?
Aene. I: I aske, that I might waken reuerence,
And on the cheek be ready with a blush

Modest as morning, when she coldly eyes
The youthfull *Phcebus*:
Which is that God in office guiding men?

Which is the high and mighty *Agamemnon*?
Aga. This Trojan scornes vs, or the men of Troy
Are ceremonious Courtiers.

Aene. Courtiers as free, as debonnaire; vnarm'd,
As bending Angels: that's their Fame, in peace:
But when they would seeme Souldiers, they haue galls,

Good armes, strong ioynts, true swords, & *Ioues* accord,
Nothing so full of heart. But peace *Aeneas*,
Peace Troyan, lay thy finger on thy lips,

The worthinesse of praise distaines his worth:
If that he prais'd himselfe, bring the praise forth.
But what the repining enemy commends,

That breath Fame blowes, that praise sole pure transcendes.
Aga. Sir, you of Troy, call you your selfe *Aeneas*?
Aene. I Greeke, that is my name.

Aga. What's your affayr? pray you?
Aene. Sir pardon, 'tis for *Agamemnons* eares.
Aga. He heares nought priuarily

That comes from Troy.
Aene. Nor I from Troy come not to whisper him,
I bring a Trumpet to awake his eare,

To set his sence on the attentue bent,
And then to speake.
Aga. Speake frankly as the winde,

It is not *Agamemnons* sleeping houre;
That thou shalt know Troyan be is awake,

He tels thee so himselfe.

Aene. Trumpet blow loud,
Send thy Brasse voyce through all these lazie Tents,
And every Greeke of mettle, let him know,
What Troy meanes fairely, shall be spoke aloud.

The Trumpets sound.

We haue great *Agamemnon* heere in Troy,
A Prince call'd *Hector*, *Priams* is his Father:
Who in this dull and long-continew'd Truce

Is rusty growne. He bad me take a Trumpet,
And to this purpose speake: Kings, Princes, Lords,
If there be one among 't the fayr ft of Greece,

That holde his Honor higher then his ease,
That feeskes his praise, more then he feares his perill,
That knowes his Valour, and knowes not his feare,

That loues his Mistis more then in confession,
(With truant vowes to her owne lips he loues)
And dare a vow her Beauty, and her Worth,

In other armes then hers: to him this Challenge.
Hector, in view of Troyans, and of Greekes,
Shall make it good, or do his best to do it.

He hath a Lady, wiser, fairer, truer,
Then euer Greeke did compass in his armes,
And will to morrow with his Trumpet call,

Midway betweene your Tents, and wales of Troy,
To rowze a Grecian that is true in loue, bad to be so
If any come, *Hector* shall honour him: -

If none, hee'l say in Troy when he retires,
The Grecian Dames are sun-burnt, and not worth
The splinter of a Lance: Euen so much.

Aga. This shall be told our Louers Lord *Aeneas*,
If none of them haue soule in such a kinde,
We left them all at home: But we are Souldiers,

And may that Souldier a meere recreant prove,
That meanes not, hath not, or is not in loue:
If then one is, or hath, or meanes to be,

That one meets *Hector*; if none else, Ile be he.
Nest. Tell him of *Nestor*, one that was a man
When *Hectors* Grandfire suckt: he is old now,

But if there be not in our Grecian mould,
One Noble man, that hath one spark of fire
To answer for his Loue; tell him from me,

Ile hide my Silver beard in a Gold Beauer,
And in my Vantbrace put this wither'd brawne,
And meeting him, will tell him, that my Lady

Was fayrer then his Grandame, and as chaste
As may be in the world: his youth in flood,
Ile pawne this truth with my three drops of blood.

Aene. Now heauens forbid such scarcitie of youth.
Vlyss. Amen.
Aga. Faire Lord *Aeneas*,

Let me touch your hand:
To our Pavillion shall I leade you first:
Achilles shall haue word of this intent,

So shall each Lord of Greece from Tent to Tent:
Your selfe shall Feast with vs before you goe,
And finde the welcome of a Noble Foe. *Exeunt.*

Alone Vlysses and Nestor.

Vlyss. *Nestor*.
Nest. What sayes *Vlysses*?
Vlyss. I haue a young conception in my braine,

Be you my time to bring it to some shape.
Nest. What is't?
Vlysses. This 'tis:

Blunt wedges riuie hard knots: the seeded Pride
That hath to this maturity blowne vp